

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims

1. (Withdrawn) A method for detecting an analyte in a specimen comprising steps of: bringing a labeled reagent containing a ligand that specifically binds to the analyte into contact with a specimen; and supplying the mixture of the analyte and the labeled reagent to a solid-phase support onto which a capture reagent that specifically binds to the analyte has been immobilized, wherein the step of bringing the specimen into contact with the labeled reagent is carried out at a site detached from the solid-phase support.
2. (Withdrawn) The method for detecting an analyte according to claim 1, wherein the step of bringing a labeled reagent containing a ligand that specifically binds to the analyte into contact with a specimen and the step of supplying the mixture of the analyte and the labeled reagent to a solid-phase support onto which a capture reagent that specifically binds to the analyte has been immobilized are carried out in a single step.
3. (Withdrawn) The method for detecting an analyte according to claim 2, which further comprises a step of filtration for removing impurities, wherein the step of bringing a labeled reagent containing a ligand that specifically binds to the analyte into contact with a specimen, the step of filtration for removing impurities, and the step of supplying the mixture of the analyte and the labeled reagent to a solid-phase support onto which a capture reagent that specifically binds to the analyte has been immobilized are carried out in a single step.
4. (Withdrawn) The method according to any one of claims 1 to 3, which is carried out by a flow-through assay technique.
5. (Withdrawn) The method according to any one of claims 1 to 3, which is carried out by an immunochromatography assay technique.
6. (Withdrawn) The method according to any one of claims 1 to 5, wherein the step of bringing a labeled reagent containing a ligand that specifically binds to the analyte into contact with a specimen is carried out in a device for supplying a specimen containing a labeled reagent.

7. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 6, wherein the device for supplying an analyte comprises a means of filtration.

8. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 7, wherein the means of filtration comprises a labeled reagent.

9. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 1, which is carried out by a flow-through assay technique, wherein a porous material impregnated with the labeled reagent containing a ligand that specifically binds to the analyte is contained in an adaptor that can be provided in an upper layer of the solid-phase support onto which a capture reagent has been immobilized, a specimen is supplied to the adaptor to bring the specimen into contact with the labeled reagent containing a ligand that specifically binds to the analyte, and the mixture of the specimen and the labeled reagent is supplied to the solid-phase support onto which the capture reagent that specifically binds to the analyte has been immobilized.

10. (Withdrawn) The method according to any one of claims 1 to 9, wherein the labeled reagent is labeled with a substance selected from the group consisting of an insoluble particulate substance, an enzyme, a fluorescent dye, and a radioisotope.

11. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 10, wherein the labeled reagent is labeled with an enzyme, and the method comprises a step of supplying a substrate for the enzyme.

12. (Withdrawn) The method according to any one of claims 1 to 11, wherein the analyte is an antigen, and the ligand and the capture reagent are each an antibody that specifically binds to the antigen.

13. (Withdrawn) The method according to any one of claims 1 to 11, wherein the analyte is an antibody, and the ligand and the capture reagent are each an antigen that specifically binds to the antibody.

14. (Withdrawn) The method according to any one of claims 1 to 13, wherein the solid-phase support is selected from the group consisting of nitrocellulose, cellulose acetate, nylon, polyethersulfone, polyvinyl alcohol, polyester, glass fiber, polyolefin, cellulose, and artificial polymers composed of mixtures of the above fibers.

15. (Withdrawn) A kit for detecting an analyte in a specimen comprising a detection apparatus comprising a solid-phase support onto which a capture reagent that specifically binds to an analyte in a

specimen has been immobilized and a device for supplying a specimen comprising a labeled reagent comprising a ligand that specifically binds to the analyte.

16. (Withdrawn) The kit according to claim 15, which further comprises a means of filtering the mixture of the specimen and the labeled reagent that had been brought into contact with each other in the device for supplying a specimen comprising a labeled reagent comprising a ligand that specifically binds to the analyte.

17. (Withdrawn) The kit according to claim 16, wherein the device for supplying a specimen comprises a means of filtration.

18. (Withdrawn) The kit according to claim 17, wherein the means of filtration comprises a labeled reagent.

19. (Withdrawn) The kit according to any one of claims 15 to 18, which is a flow-through assay kit.

20. (Withdrawn) The kit according to any one of claims 15 to 18, which is an immunochromatography assay kit.

21. (Withdrawn) The kit according to any of claims 15 to 20, wherein the labeled reagent is labeled with a substance selected from the group consisting of an insoluble particulate substance, an enzyme, a fluorescent dye, and a radioisotope.

22. (Withdrawn) The kit according to claim 21, wherein the labeled reagent is an enzyme, and the kit comprises a means of supplying a substrate for the enzyme.

23. (Withdrawn) The kit according to any one of claims 15 to 22, wherein the analyte is an antigen, and the ligand and the capture reagent are each an antibody that specifically binds to the antigen.

24. (Withdrawn) The kit according to any one of claims 15 to 22, wherein the analyte is an antibody and the ligand and the capture reagent are each an antigen that specifically binds to the antibody.

25. (Withdrawn) The kit according to any one of claims 15 to 24, wherein the solid-phase support is selected from the group consisting of nitrocellulose, cellulose acetate, nylon, polyethersulfone, polyvinyl

alcohol, polyester, glass fiber, polyolefin, cellulose, and artificial polymers composed of mixtures of the above fibers.

26. (Currently Amended) A flow-through assay apparatus for detecting an analyte, comprising (A) a solid-phase support onto which a capture reagent that specifically binds to the analyte has been immobilized and (B) a porous material impregnated with a labeled reagent containing a ligand that specifically binds to the analyte,

wherein the porous material is contained in an adaptor that (i) is provided in an upper layer of the solid-phase support and (ii) is contacted with the solid-phase support, and

wherein the porous material is configured such that (iii) the analyte and the labeled reagent are contacted and mixed within the porous material and (iv) the porous material does not block the opening of the adaptor, whereby aggregated images are observable without removing the adaptor.

27. (Original) The apparatus for detecting an analyte according to claim 26, wherein the labeled reagent is labeled with a substance selected from the group consisting of an insoluble particulate substance, an enzyme, a fluorescent dye, and a radioisotope.

28. (Previously Presented) The apparatus for detecting an analyte according to claim 26, wherein the analyte is an antigen, and the ligand and the capture reagent are each an antibody that specifically binds to the antigen.

29. (Previously Presented) The apparatus for detecting an analyte according to claim 26, wherein the analyte is an antibody, and the ligand and the capture reagent are each an antigen that specifically binds to the antibody.

30. (Original) The apparatus for detecting an analyte according to any one of claims 26 to 29, wherein the solid-phase support is selected from the group consisting of nitrocellulose, cellulose acetate, nylon, polyethersulfone, polyvinyl alcohol, polyester, glass fiber, polyolefin, cellulose, and artificial polymers composed of mixtures of the above fibers.

31. (Withdrawn) A device for supplying a specimen used for detecting an analyte in a specimen, which comprises a container for accommodating a specimen and a nozzle section for supplying the specimen to an apparatus for detecting an analyte in the specimen, wherein the nozzle section comprises a means of filtering a specimen and a labeled reagent capable of forming a complex with an analyte in a specimen.

32. (Withdrawn) The device for supplying a specimen according to claim 31, wherein the labeled reagent is labeled with a substance selected from the group consisting of an insoluble particulate substance, an enzyme, a fluorescent dye, and a radioisotope.

33. (Withdrawn) The device for supplying a specimen according to claim 31 or 32, wherein the means for filtering a specimen is a filter.